

REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration of the application in view of this Amendment.

Claims 1-25 are cancelled. Claims 26-42 are added in view of the Examiner's suggestion of patentable subject matter, on page 5 of the Office Action.

Claim 26

Method claim 26 includes the step of distinguishing the photoacoustic signal emitted by each effluent from the signals emitted by the other effluents based on differences in transit time. This limitation relating to transit time is not disclosed or suggested by any of the cited references. Therefore, claim 26 is patentable over the cited prior art.

Claims 27-38

Claims 27-38 depend from claim 26. The limitations that they add to claim 26 distinguish them further from the prior art. Therefore, claims 27-38 also are patentable.

Claim 39

Apparatus claim 39 recites means for distinguishing the signal emitted by each effluent from the signals emitted by the other effluents based on differences in transit time for each signal to reach the microphone. This limitation relating to transit time is not disclosed or suggested by any of the cited references. Therefore, claim 39 is patentable over the cited prior art.

Claims 40-42

Claims 40-42 depend from claim 39. The limitations that they add to claim 39 distinguish them further from the prior art. Therefore, claims 40-42 also are patentable.

Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance, and allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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